

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 585

By

A RESOLUTION to recognize Robert Prosser on the occasion of his retirement.

WHEREAS, it is appropriate that the members of this legislative body should honor those citizens who have performed with uncommon devotion and enthusiasm throughout their years of industry; and

WHEREAS, Robert Prosser is one such estimable person who has served with distinction for fifteen years as the president of Bethel University; and

WHEREAS, Robert Prosser recently took a much deserved retirement, leaving his post on July 31, 2013; and

WHEREAS, his visionary leadership has led Bethel University through a period of incredible growth and unrivaled development. When he became the university's president in 1998, enrollment was just over 200 students; by the fall of 2012, that number had risen to more than 5,000; and

WHEREAS, President Prosser's leadership has led to the implementation of a number of programs which have boosted the teaching, research, and learning capacity of the Bethel student body and faculty. These include positioning Bethel as the first school in Tennessee to incorporate the IBM ThinkPad Program, which equipped students with a laptop computer as part of tuition; the design and implementation of the Success program, which geared the bachelor level experience to accommodate needs and lifestyles of adult learners, who are the increasing demographic in higher education, especially students already involved in raising families; and the advent of Renaissance, the Bethel Performing Arts Experience, which patterned a scholarship program for performing artists in keeping with the athletics scholarships program; and

WHEREAS, under his astute guidance, a number of new academic programs were founded, including the Bachelor of Science in Nursing program, the Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies program, the Master of Business Administration program, and an on-line bachelor and master degree program in criminal justice which is one of only fourteen in the nation endorsed by the Federal Bureau of Investigation National Academy Associates; and

WHEREAS, President Prosser has cultivated an atmosphere of excellence both in and out of the classroom, and under his presidency Bethel has captured two national championships: the men's soccer national championship in 2008 and the in-line roller hockey national championship in 2012; and

WHEREAS, known as "The Entrepreneurial President," Robert Prosser has built a legacy of leadership at Bethel which shall continue to guide the university for years to come; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting that this legislative body give due recognition to Robert Prosser, one of Tennessee's most distinguished and accomplished educational leaders, on the occasion of his retirement; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED EIGHTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we honor Bethel University president Robert Prosser on the occasion of his retirement and extend to him our best wishes for success in his every future endeavor.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.